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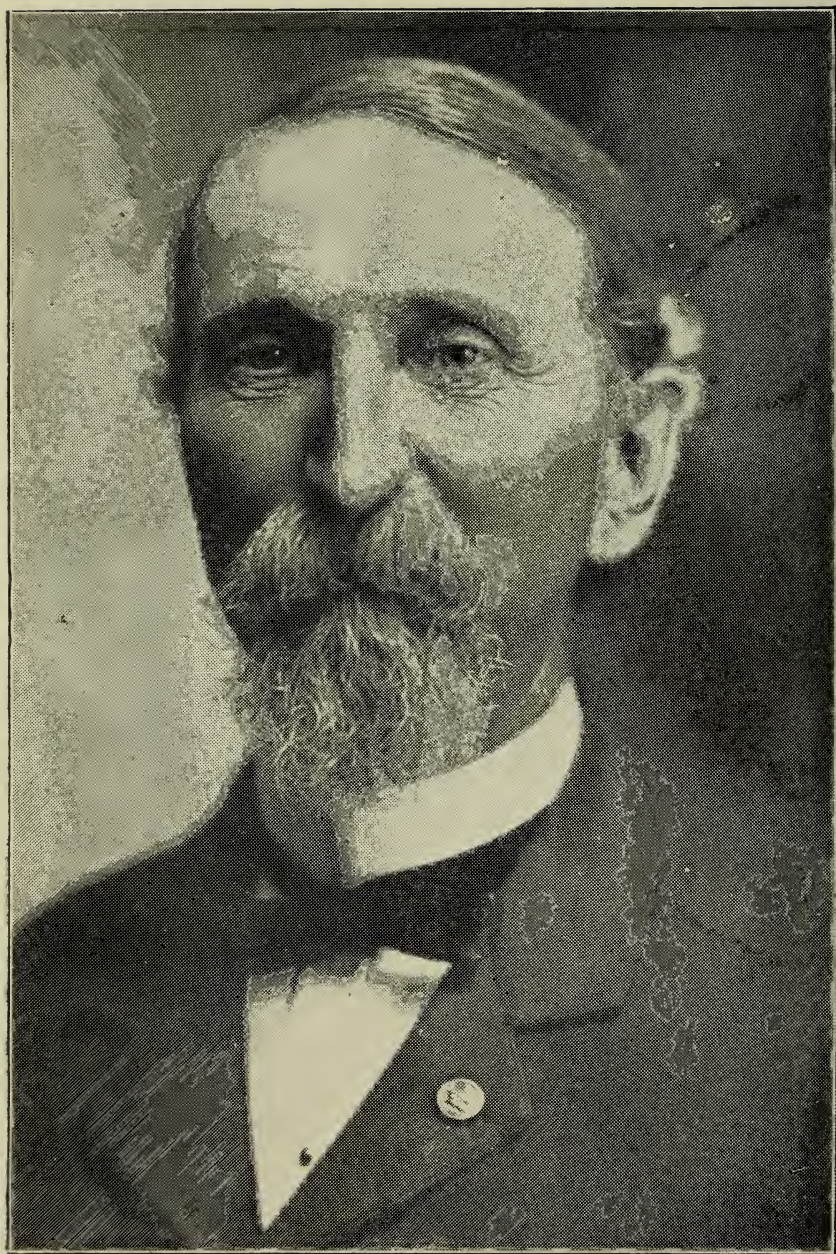


ALUMNI NUMBER



It is the policy of The Miami Bulletin to devote occasional issues to the interests of the Alumni and former students of Miami University. We therefore present in this number a sketch of the life of one of Miami's most distinguished alumni, General Andrew L. Harris, of the class of 1860, now honored Governor of the State of Ohio.

(EDITOR.)



Governor Harris Today

Andrew L. Harris

MIAMI ALUMNUS, FARMER, SOLDIER, LAWYER, PROBATE JUDGE, MEMBER OF
OHIO SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND OF THE
NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
AND NOW GOVERNOR OF OHIO.

Throughout the history of our state and nation, the farmer boy has been the creature of fortunate environment. His lot has not always been ideal, and much may still be done to make farm life more attractive. With added home comforts, social diversions and educational advantages, it would be more inviting and more satisfactory in its results; but when all its limitations are considered, the fact remains that a youth with the rugged health, sturdy perseverance and independent spirit, the distinctive gifts of communion with nature under the broad and open sky, enters life's arena with no mean equipment for the achievement of success. He has known neither satiating luxury nor grinding poverty, and he is a stranger to the bitterness too frequently engendered by their contact. He is naturally industrious, acquisitive and inquisitive. He is not afraid of work and he is willing to learn. Experience has taught him that he must earn his way, that he may expect little from the magician of happy fortune, that for conservative and certain gains he must rely upon investment of diligent habits and faithful labor.

Seventy years ago, Ohio had an essentially rural population. According to the census of 1840, there were then in the state 1,519,467 persons of whom only 64,522 lived in cities of over 5,000 inhabitants. Many of the comforts and conveniences of the present were unknown to the pioneers of those days, but they enjoyed a high average degree of prosperity and opportunity. It was no misfortune to be born a Buckeye in the decade popularly known as "the thirties."

Andrew Lintner Harris first saw the light of day in Milford township, Butler county, Ohio, about four miles from the village of Oxford, November 17, 1835. His grandfather,

Joseph Harris, was a native of Ireland and in 1797 crossed the Atlantic to America, taking up his abode in Cincinnati. Soon after the close of the War of 1812 he moved to Butler county, Ohio. His son, Benjamin Harris, the father of our subject, was born in Cincinnati, March 3, 1803, and was married April 3, 1829, to Miss Nancy Lintner, of Butler county. He was an intelligent, progressive farmer, the father of seven children, of whom Governor Harris is the only survivor. The father passed away in 1872 and the mother's death occurred in 1891.

About the year 1838 the family moved to a farm in Dixon township, Preble county, where Andrew grew up to young manhood. His summers were devoted to the varied and somewhat arduous duties that called for willing hands on the farm in those days. Agricultural implements were still of a primitive character. The mowing machine, the binder, the hay tedder and the sulky plow were unknown. Of the farmers of that period it could be truly said, in the language of the poet:

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

The sickle and the scythe, which still live in the songs of the poet and on the canvas of the artist, were then very realistic implements in the harvest field, though the cradle had largely supplanted the former. Threshing machines were not numerous and the "dull thunder of alternate flails" frequently resounded through the hazy days of autumn. Farm life had its pleasant diversions, however. There were log-rollings, barn-raising, apple-cuttings, and, under the mellow moonlight, corn-huskings, with rustling of fodder and peals of laughter that still gladden hearts as they come on the wings of memory across the intervening years.

At an early age the subject of this sketch entered the district school. Teachers were then paid by subscription and frequently boarded about in the homes of their patrons. Glass had taken the place of greased paper in the windows, but school houses were usually built of logs and the furniture

was of the pioneer type. Fuel was furnished by patrons, who took turns in sledding in huge loads of wood. Sometimes this was cut, ready for use, but more frequently it was delivered at the wood-pile where the large boys, by skillfully wielding the ax, reduced it to the proper dimensions, while the small children looked on with interest, dodging occasionally the chips that flew at each stroke. Among the smaller boys, was one destined to be governor of the state, but before he became old enough to wield the ax, the tide of progress swept away this department of manual training, and fuel was delivered on contract ready for use. Among the events of those days still pleasantly recalled, were the Christmas treats. The teacher was barred out of the room, and after a failure to get in, he produced the treat already provided in anticipation, and enjoyed the occasion quite as heartily as the pupils. It was a custom whose proper celebration required these formalities.

Young Harris was much impressed with some of the young men who taught in this school. They brought interesting accounts of the great world beyond this rural district. In the long winter evenings he listened attentively while the schoolmaster, a guest at his home, told of wonderful scientific discoveries, rehearsed stirring legends of history, and related personal experiences at private schools and colleges. In the winter of 1851-2 John W. Crampton was teacher. He was a student at Miami University and had much to say about his work there. His influence aroused what seemed to young Harris to be a vain hope that he might some time attend this institution. The following winter Crampton was succeeded by Frank M. Demotte, still living, and for many years the superintendent of the schools of Lewisburg, Preble county. He was frequently at the Harris home. He was but little older than his pupil, and between the two sprang up a close friendship that still remains unbroken.

Young Harris wished to attend college, but a serious difficulty was in the way. A portion of the mortgage on his father's farm was still unpaid, and he felt that he should not leave home until the debt was discharged.

At last a way seemed to open for the realization of his hopes. The mortgage was finally lifted. A private school

had opened at West Florence, Preble county, under the direction of Professor Warren C. Emerson, a scholarly instructor from Massachusetts, who, at the outbreak of the Civil War, became paymaster in the United States service, with rank of major. Under his instruction, young Harris prepared to enter Miami University. In this institution he enrolled in January, 1858.

The matter of expenses had been to him a serious consideration. By careful management he had saved a small sum of money. The cost of board, naturally the largest item in his necessary outlay, he reduced to the minimum. Boarding, as classified by the students of that day, was of three kinds—table board in private families, club boarding and “batching.” The last was the cheapest and for this reason commended itself to the young student with high hopes and a slender purse. A room was rented in the old Southeast Dormitory, still standing, and he took up his abode therein with a most congenial companion in the person of his cousin, Joseph Harris, who was his roommate through the entire college course. This cousin’s parents lived on a farm a few miles from Oxford, from which the two lads regularly replenished their stock of provisions. Their practice of the culinary art for their own benefit may not have been equal to a course in one of our modern departments of domestic science, but they seemed to have made a success of it, for both have enjoyed good health to this day. “Batching” was more common at college then than now, and enforced economy in an effort to acquire an education was deemed honorable, as it has ever been and is today.

The Harris boys soon felt very much at home in the University, with classmates, who, like themselves, were working cheerfully and faithfully to acquire a liberal education. They were favorably impressed with the professors who were held in high respect by the student body, and deemed it a privilege to hear them in chapel and classroom. The lectures and addresses of Dr. David Swing were regarded as especially stimulating and inspiring. Professor R. W. McFarland, a genius in his department, taught mathematics, a favorite study with the boys. He is still living. Professor O. N. Stoddard,



The Home of Governor Harris at Eaton, Ohio

with the hand of a master, led them into the delightful fields of natural science. With consummate skill he manipulated apparatus of his own manufacture to reveal the wonders of nature. Dr. J. W. Hall, the president of the University, was an able executive, a fluent and pleasing speaker. The latter gift was, perhaps, at times a source of weakness. His chapel lectures were criticised because they were a trifle too long, and students in his classes with poor lessons, sometimes escaped by skillfully raising a question that would start the learned doctor on a lucid exposition that would consume the time of a recitation. The origin of this ruse is of ancient date. It is still in vogue. He had come to the University from Alabama. Naturally enough he brought with him a kindly feeling for his brethren in the South and their peculiar institutions. In spite of his self-restraint, this feeling sometimes cropped out in his conversation and lectures before his classes and aroused some opposition among the extreme anti-slavery element of the faculty and the student body.

The Harris boys joined the Eccritean Literary Society and Andrew became a zealous participant in all the exercises except music. He found his chief interest in debate and was ever ready to take part in the discussion of the momentous questions that were agitating the entire country and preparing the way for the cataclysm of civil war. The air was surcharged with political electricity. The students came from the North and the South, and in the war of words they stood right loyally by the faith of their fathers, as they did later on the battlefield, where issues were submitted to the arbitrament of arms; where brothers met in deadly strife and wrote in letters of blood the testimonials of their courage and devotion.* The exciting scenes in the national capitol were re-enacted on miniature arena, but with equal fervor, in the literary societies in the Miami University. The place and the time were educative. Truly has one of the participants declared, "No professor was so valuable to many a student as

*When the Oxford Rifles, composed largely of Miami students, started to Columbus to enter the service of the United States, they were accompanied as far as Hamilton by some of their fellow-students who were on their way South to enlist in the Confederate Army.

On the battlefield of Shiloh, Joel Allen Battle, an alumnus of Miami University, who had entered the Confederate service, was found dead by his college friend, John R. Chamberlin, of the Union Army. This boy in gray was buried by three of his former classmates who wore the blue. The pathetic story of the funeral is told in the Diamond Anniversary Volume, pages 217-20.

his literary society; no classroom was so attractive as his literary hall; no wit or humor more talked of then that which flashed in the attritions of society debates." In these forensic contests young Harris doubtless acquired much of the skill that afterward brought him recognition as a master parliamentarian.

The political orator was the hero of the hour. Harris was captivated by a fellow-student from Cincinnati, John Webb, whom in after years he declared to be "one of the most adroit and eloquent speakers" that he ever heard.

All too soon the days glided by at Old Miami. The locust trees on the campus unfolded their pendant clusters of fragrant white flowers. It was June, 1860. Commencement day was at hand. In the graduating class were the Harris boys who received the degree of Bachelor of Science. They had worked their way through the University they were satisfied; they separated, each going to his father's farm where he would have chosen to remain, had not duty and patriotism called to other fields.

In the winter of 1860-61 Andrew found leisure in the long evenings and at the suggestion of his uncle, Joel W. Harris, then an attorney in Eaton, Ohio, took a course of reading which was recommended as worthy the perusal of "any intelligent citizen interested in public affairs." It consisted of lectures in Walker's "Introduction to American Law," with corresponding chapters in Kent's "Commentary," and Blackstone's "Commentaries." These were read with much interest, but the young student at that time had little thought of preparing for the legal profession.

The spring of 1861 brought the opening events of the Civil War. Fort Sumter fell. President Lincoln called for troops to put down the rebellion. The North responded with alacrity and the land resounded with the marshalling of arms. This brought surprise to many, but the boys from Miami anticipated the conflict. Mr. Harris deemed it the duty of able-bodied young men without dependent families to respond to the call. He belonged to that class and at the first opportunity he enlisted as a private. In April, 1861, he became a member of the Twentieth Ohio Volunteer Infantry for three months'

service. Before going to the front he was made second lieutenant of Company C, and the following August was mustered out with the rank of captain. In October of the same year he recruited Company C, of the Seventy-fifth Ohio Volunteer Infantry, and was commissioned its captain November 9, 1861. At the battle of McDowell, West Virginia, which was one of the bloodiest of the war for the number of troops engaged, he was severely wounded. Later he led his company in the engagement at Cedar Mountain and the second battle of Bull Run. The colors of the regiment were hit ninety times, and brave men fell under them, but they were borne aloft at the front through the hottest of the fray. On January 12, 1863, Captain Harris was made major and on the death of his colonel in the disastrous battle of Chancellorsville, he was promoted to the command of the regiment, May 3, 1863.

His command was actively engaged throughout the epoch-making battle of Gettysburg. The division to which it was assigned was hotly pressed by Ewell's corps. Colonel Harris was sent with thirteen officers and 169 men to hold back the enemy at the point of the bayonet while the Union forces took up a stronger position in the rear. In a short time four of the officers were killed and seven wounded. The losses in the ranks were proportionately large. Having accomplished the work for which his command had been detailed he slowly withdrew the shattered remnant through the town of Gettysburg and joined the main force on the heights beyond. His superior officers had fallen and Colonel Harris was assigned to the command of the brigade. On the second day of the battle the new position was furiously attacked by Early's division, led by Hays' brigade, composed of the famous Louisiana Tigers. Colonel Harris' brigade held the position, but he was again badly wounded. Through three days his command was under fire and it was the first to enter the town after the battle.

On the 18th of August his brigade commenced operations on Morris Island against Fort Wagner, opposite Fort Sumter. The advance was slow and tedious. Sandbags were kept in position to protect from bullets the men working in the trenches, but there was no protection on this barren sand bar from the rays of the hot August sun. The work steadily pro-

gressed and the sappers were at last nearing the fort. On the night of September 6th nine hundred selected men, under the command of Colonel Harris, were detailed to make the assault on the sea front, with instructions to march against the works at daybreak, but the enemy observing the preparation withdrew and Colonel Harris, at the head of his men, took possession of the fort.

Early in 1864 his regiment was sent to Jacksonville, Florida, where it was mounted for cavalry service. In May of the same year he went to the headwaters of the St. John and Kissinee rivers and destroyed a large amount of cotton and other Confederate stores, and captured five thousand beef cattle, all without the loss of a man. On the 14th of August he was sent by General Hatch on an expedition to the rear of the enemy with only two hundred men. He obeyed orders and took a few prisoners, but was met by a large force and was compelled to ride night and day to keep out of the hands of the enemy. On the morning of the 17th he halted at Gainesville to rest, supposing himself to be temporarily secure but was soon attacked by 1,400 men. As retreat was out of the question, he either had to cut his way out or surrender. The odds were seven to one, but desperate as was the attempt, he succeeded in getting away with one-half of his little band.

He was mustered out of the service as colonel of the Seventy-fifth Ohio, January 15, 1865, and on the 13th of March was brevetted brigadier-general for gallant conduct on the field of battle.

Governor Harris retains his interest in military affairs through his connection with the Grand Army of the Republic and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion. No man more thoroughly enjoys association with his comrades of other days. Owing to the wound in his right arm, he cannot attend functions or receptions where there is much handshaking without suffering for days afterward, but, notwithstanding this disability his favorite occasions are the campfires and the reunions. It has been stated by many of the survivors of the Civil War that General Harris would probably be the last of their comrades who would be Governor of Ohio and they appreciate his recognition of them in every way that is con-



**Governor Harris as he entered the
Civil War in 1861**



**General Harris at the close of the
Civil War**

sistent with his sense of duty and of the best interests of the State.

At the close of the war General Harris returned to his father's farm, but as his wounds incapacitated him for arduous manual labor, he continued the study of law and was admitted to the bar by the district court in 1865. He continued in active and successful practice of his profession until 1875.

The field of politics originally had little attraction for him. He was urged to become a candidate for state senator in 1863, but preferred to remain with his command in the army. The suggestion of his candidacy was revived by his friends in 1865, and he was elected to represent, in the state senate, the district composed of Preble and Montgomery counties. The first legislature that he saw in session was the one in the upper branch of which he sat as a member. At the close of his term of office, Senator Harris continued his law practice in partnership with Robert Miller, until January, 1876, when he withdrew from the firm to enter upon the duties of probate judge, an office to which he had been elected the previous October and which he filled for two terms. In 1885 he was elected state representative and re-elected in 1887. In 1889 he was appointed by Governor Foraker trustee of the Ohio Soldiers' and Sailors' Orphans' Home.

Higher honors awaited him. In 1891 a strong candidate was sought to make the race for lieutenant-governor with William McKinley. In the previous gubernatorial election the republican party had suffered defeat, and it was the desire of the leaders to present a ticket that should appeal strongly to the voters of Ohio. General Harris first personally met William McKinley at the convention in which they were nominated to lead the ticket. They were triumphantly elected in November of that year and re-elected by increased majorities in 1893. In 1894 Lieutenant-Governor Harris was a candidate for Congress in his district and reduced the normal democratic majority from over 4,000 to 202.

Governor Harris has given much study to labor conditions and agricultural interests. This fact was recognized by President McKinley who, in September, 1898, appointed him one of the members of the National Industrial Commission, with headquarters at Washington. He was honored with the

position of chairman of the sub-commission on agriculture and agricultural labor. The commission was created to investigate industrial conditions and recommend ways and means of relief for the depression that had been quite general throughout the country before the inauguration of President McKinley; but before the commissioners met and organized, conditions had greatly improved and an era of prosperity had commenced. After careful consideration it was decided to follow the general plan of the British Royal Commission and institute inquiries in regard to agriculture, transportation, immigration, trusts and combines, capital and labor and other topics of interest, in order that all who desired might have accurate and authentic information on these important questions. It was thought that the results of this investigation would aid Congress in the enactment of remedial legislation. The mere names of the subjects covered in the nineteen volumes of the report indicate the wide scope of the work of the commission. They are: "Trusts and Industrial Combinations," "Prison Labor," "Transportation," "Labor Legislation," "Distribution and Marketing of Farm Products," "Capital and Labor," "Agriculture," "Immigration and Education," "Foreign Labor Laws," "Labor Organizations," "Industrial Combinations in Europe." In conducting the inquiries and summarizing the testimony, Commissioner Harris did his full share of work. He was associated with United States senators and representatives, and eminent specialists in the fields covered by the investigation. The results are found on the pages of the voluminous and valuable report of the commission. It is a standard reference work on industrial conditions in the United States. The future historian will not pass it by when he records the social and economic progress of our country.

General Harris was especially qualified to conduct the investigations relating to agriculture and agricultural labor. At heart he has been all his life a farmer. As a correspondent tersely puts it, "He has practiced law but has always preferred the farm to the life of the lawyer. He owns about five hundred acres of good land in Preble county, Ohio. He is a farmer, not for political purposes, but because he likes the life and makes money out of it." His farm property includes the



The Farm Residence of Governor Harris

old homestead in which his early years were spent. He takes a sentimental pride in keeping it in repair, just as it used to be. The house has not changed much in appearance since in the forties he breasted the winter snows to make his daily journey to the school house about a mile distant. His farms are well kept, and he enjoys most thoroughly his frequent tours of inspection.

In 1905 General Harris was nominated a third time for lieutenant-governor; and although in the election following the head of the republican ticket was defeated by a plurality by 42,647, General Harris had 29,179 more votes than his democratic opponent. By virtue of his office, he presided over a senate in which his party was in the minority. Forty years earlier he began his legislative experience as a member of that body. Opposing parties and rival interests were so equally divided that unusual tact was required in the presiding officer. From the opening day of the session Governor Pattison was confined to his home by serious illness. While General Harris had long been recognized as a skillful parliamentarian, never before did he so conspicuously exhibit the qualities of the model presiding officer, as in the Seventy-seventh General Assembly. While some of the sessions were exciting and the clash of rival interests aroused temporary bitterness, he reached the day of adjournment with the respect and esteem, not only of the members of that body, but of the people of the State, who had followed attentively the legislative proceedings. As president of the senate he has had few equals and no superior in the Buckeye State.

The afternoon of June 18, 1906, brought the sad news of the death of Governor Pattison. At the time Lieutenant Governor Harris was on his farm and did not receive the news until he returned to his home in Eaton. The oath of office was administered at the residence of his friend and neighbor, Judge Elam Fisher, of Eaton, Ohio. After the funeral of Governor Pattison he assumed the duties of his new position with the modesty that has characterized the man throughout his entire career. He has been regularly at the post of duty and has so carefully administered his trust that he has won the confidence, respect and good will of the people. There is a general feeling that with the reins in his hands a wise

administration of the affairs of the Buckeye commonwealth is assured.

Governor Harris was united in marriage to Miss Caroline Conger, of West Florence, Ohio, October 17, 1865. They have one son, Walter C., who was graduated from Miami University, and also took an electrical course in the Ohio State University. He is now an artist on the New York World.

Governor Harris has always been a republican in politics. He cast his first presidential vote for Abraham Lincoln. He is a partisan in the usual acceptation of that term, but he has wisely avoided factional contests. For very many years he was chairman and a member of the republican committee of Preble county. Although an active partisan in the campaign organization, he always had the confidence of his neighbors of opposite politics. An important element that has contributed to his success is the good will and loyal support of the voters of his own county, who, almost to a man, are personally acquainted with him and, regardless of politics, esteem him highly.

Enlisting as a private soldier he passed through all the intermediate ranks until he commanded a brigade in the battle of Gettysburg. He passed through similar gradations in civil life. This experience together with his energy and ability eminently fit him for executive duties. After service in both branches of the Legislature, he was the presiding officer of the Ohio Senate for three terms, making a dozen years of participation in the legislative department. He was always a student of state affairs even when not in office and was then a member of campaign committees, delegate to conventions and the like. He toured the State with McKinley, Governor Herrick and others. Previously he had in every district and county associates in legislative work so that he knows representative men in all parts of Ohio with whom he can confer in any emergency. Professionally, mentally, morally and otherwise, age improved rather than impaired him. His work on the farm, study at home and good habits seemed to have strengthened him physically as well as otherwise. Few men ever assumed the office of Governor under more strenuous conditions and few have withstood its exactions as well as he.

With his simple and abstemious habits, in spite of his wounds, Governor Harris enjoys excellent health. At the age of seventy-two years he is younger than most men at fifty. It is not too much to expect that he will add to the achievements of the past, many years of service, to round out his varied, eventful and eminently honorable career.



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